

SETS Community of Practice

Communique: First meeting of the Regional Settlement sub-group

Videoconference – 13 August 2020

On 13 August, the SETS Community of Practice (SETS CoP) held its first meeting for members of the Regional Settlement sub-group.

Terms of Reference and Interaction Rules

Attendees agreed with the updated SETSCoP Terms of Reference (TOR) and Interaction Rules, there were no amendments suggested.

Challenges for Regional Settlement

Attendees shared some of the unique challenges they face in supporting newly arrived migrants and refugees in regional settings. The lack of resources, not only organisationally but also in wrap around supports was highlighted as a key concern. Some other challenges shared include:

- supporting clients who require medium intensity support, with limited resources
- issues with regional infrastructure such as limited public transport
- time spent promoting cultural awareness and helping to build capacity of mainstream services to support SETS clients
- many on spousal or partner visas not being aware of SETS or their eligibility for support
- volunteers can be unreliable or unable to assist
- issues with clients' acquiring English
- ineligible clients (i.e. over 5 years or SHEV visa holders) seeking or being referred for assistance
- Multicultural Service Officers (MSOs) are no longer available at some regional Centrelink centres.

Attendees also shared some issues they have faced with reporting requirements for SETS. Some emphasised the value in including case studies to showcase the work done through SETS.

Innovative approaches

Providers shared some of the innovative approaches they employ to overcome challenges, which include:

- advertising of SETS through handing out flyers in the community
- facilitating friendship groups to create supportive networks for clients
- engagement of local government, such as a collaboration to create translated COVID-19 audio recordings
- relationships with employers, especially as there are currently more seasonal positions available
- referring to HSP specialised and intensive services for clients needing additional support

- creating work experience opportunities for past clients through volunteering.

Due to the current climate and opportunities available for employment in regional settings at this time, many providers are focusing on how best to support their clients' economic participation.

Area of Focus

There was general consensus of the value that this sub-group could have in focusing on how conversations and discussions could facilitate the sharing of best practice to overcome some regional challenges. Considering how best practice differs for different client groups and visa sub-classes, was emphasised.

Attendees agreed to focus on two settlement outcomes per meeting and collectively discuss their best practice approaches and innovation in regional settings. Further that these learnings be shared to the greater SETSCoP through the communiques.

Next Meeting

There was agreement that the second meeting should focus on the sharing of best practice relating to settlement outcomes of English and employment.

Parenting, education and training, were also presented as priority areas for discussion and may be the focus of the third meeting.

Resources shared

- [SETSCoP Terms of Reference and Interaction Rules](#)
- [Steps To Settlement Success: A Toolkit For Rural And Regional Communities \(Regional Australia Institute, Scanlon Foundation and Welcoming Cities\)](#)
- [Greater Shepparton COVID-19 Translated Audio Files](#)